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PROVISIONAL APPLICATION COVER SHEET

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This is a request for filing a PROVISIONAL APPLICATION under 37 CFR § 1.53 (b)(2).

Docket Number		1170/2		Type a plus sign (+) inside this box	+
INVENTOR(S)/APPLICANT(S)					
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL	RESIDENCE (CITY AND EITHER STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY)		
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TITLE OF THE INVENTION (280 characters max)					
SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR BONUS POINTS UTILIZATION					
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STATE	Virginia	ZIP CODE	22202	COUNTRY	U.S.A.
ENCLOSED APPLICATION PARTS (check all that apply)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specification	Number of Pages	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Entity Statement
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METHOD OF PAYMENT (check one)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A check or money order is enclosed to cover the Provisional filing fees			PROVISIONAL FILING FEE AMOUNT(S)	\$150.00
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The invention was made by an agency of the United States Government or under a contract with an agency of the United States Government.

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Respectfully submitted,

SIGNATURE

TYPED or PRINTED NAME Mark M. FriedmanDate 10 AUG 99REGISTRATION NO. 33,883☐ Additional inventors are being named on separately numbered sheets attached hereto

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FILING ONLY

APPLICATION FOR PATENT

5

Inventors: Michael Inbar, Igal Sharon, Michal Laor, Ilan Laor and
Eldad Hahmon

10

15

Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR BONUS POINTS
UTILIZATION

20

FIELD AND BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a novel system and method for the
utilization of bonus points which enable a consumer of goods to enjoy a
superior versatility of benefits as is compared to traditional coupons.

25

A traditional coupon is a detachable portion of a certificate, ticket,
label, advertisement, or the like, entitling the holder to something, as a
gift or discount, or for use as an order blank, a contest entry form, etc.

However, traditional coupons are typically limited in the versatility of
benefits they entitle a holder.

30

In the credit cards era, and in order to encourage the use of credit,
the concept of coupons has broadened. Thus, credit companies provide

credit card users with bonus points according to the amount and/or type of credit consumed thereby, whereas the users are free to trade some or

~~all of the bonus points at their discretion into gifts, aerial mileage,~~

discounts for certain goods, etc., according to a list of a plurality of
5 offered benefits, each of which has a dedicated bonus points value associated therewith. Thus, a credit card user can choose a benefit or benefits of his choice for his bonus points. It will be appreciated that the versatility and therefore attractiveness of the credit card bonus points
system is far superior over that of traditional coupons.

10 While the credit companies bonus points system encourages users to consume credit, no equivalent system which enjoys such versatility and attractiveness exists for encouraging consumers to consume goods other than credit.

There is thus a widely recognized need for, and it would be highly
15 advantageous to have, a bonus points system which enjoys the versatility and attractiveness of the credit card bonus points system, and yet is applicable to encourage consumption of goods other than credit.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the present invention there is provided a system for
~~granting bonus points to a plurality of consumers, the bonus points being~~
associated with a plurality of goods, each of the plurality of goods being
5 coded by a code, the system comprising (a) a plurality of user clients
being at a respective disposal of the plurality of consumers, each of the
plurality of user clients including a code identifier operatively
communicating therewith, the code identifier being capable of identifying
the code of each of the plurality of goods; and (b) at least one
10 communication server being in communication with each of the plurality
of user clients upon establishing a dial-up connection therewith, the at
least one communication server being configured so as to cumulatively
grant any one consumer of the plurality of consumers a predetermined
value of bonus points upon identification of the code of any one of the
15 plurality of goods.

According to further features in preferred embodiments of the
invention described below, the at least one communication server being
further configured so as to allow any one consumer of the plurality of
consumers to select at least one benefit from a plurality of optional

benefits, each of the plurality of optional benefits is trade for a predetermined value of bonus points.

According to still further features in the described preferred

embodiments the code identifier is an optical scanner, whereas the code
5 is an optical code.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the optical scanner is a barcode reader, whereas the optical
code is a barcode.

According to still further features in the described preferred
10 embodiments the code identifier is a magnetic code reader, whereas the
code is a magnetic code.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the code identifier is a radiofrequency reader, whereas the
code is a radiofrequency code.

15 According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the code identifier includes a base communicating with a
user client of the plurality of user clients and a remote identifier
communicating with the base by remote communication.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the base is a stationary base.

According to still further features in the described preferred

embodiments the base communicates with the user client of the plurality
5 of user clients by cord communication.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the base communicates with a user client of the plurality of user clients only if the user client is a table top computer.

According to still further features in the described preferred
10 embodiments the base requires a constant voltage for operation.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the constant voltage is about 110 Volts or about 220 Volts.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the base or the remote identifier limits communication
15 directly or indirectly only to the communication server.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the communication server communicates with the user
client only if the user client communicates with the base.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the base is operative only if so instructed by the
communication server.

According to still further features in the described preferred
5 embodiments a specific base is operative only with a specific user client.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments a specific base entitles a specific consumer to a base related
bonus.

According to still further features in the described preferred
10 embodiments the remote identifier is a remote optical scanner.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the remote optical scanner neutralizes the code following
scanning.

According to still further features in the described preferred
15 embodiments the remote identifier and the base form an obligatory
operative pair.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the remote identifier includes a mechanism for identifying
a surrounding characteristic.

According to still further features in the described preferred embodiments the code or a part of the code is invisible to a naked eye.

~~According to still further features in the described preferred~~

embodiments the communication between the code identifier and one of
5 the plurality of user clients is effected by a communication mode selected
from the group consisting of cord and cordless communication modes.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the cordless communication mode is selected from the
group consisting of infrared communication, microwave communication,
10 sound communication and radio communication.

According to still further features in the described preferred
embodiments the code identifier operatively communicating with any
one of the plurality of user clients is identifiable by a digital code.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is
15 provided a method for granting bonus points to a consumer, the method
comprising the steps of (a) associating each of a plurality of goods with a
code; (b) operatively communicating between a user client of the
consumer and a code identifier, the code identifier being capable of
identifying the code of each of the plurality of goods; (c) establishing a

dial-up connection between the user client and at least one communication server being configured so as to cumulatively grant the

consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of

the code of any one of the plurality of goods; (d) using the code
5 identifier, identifying the code of at least one of a plurality of goods
purchased by the consumer and forwarding the code via the user client to
the communication server; and (e) cumulatively granting the consumer a
predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of
the at least one of the plurality of goods purchased by the consumer.

10 The present invention successfully addresses the shortcomings of
the presently known configurations by providing a bonus points system
and method which enjoys the versatility and attractiveness of the credit
card bonus points system, and yet is applicable to encourage
consumption of goods other than credit.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is herein described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a schematic depiction of the system according to the present invention; and

FIG. 2 is a schematic depiction of a code identifier employed with the system according to the present invention

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention is of a novel system and method which can be used to grant consumers benefit convertible bonus points when purchasing goods. The system and method of the present invention enable a consumer of goods to enjoy a superior versatility of benefits as is compared to traditional coupons.

The principles and operation of the system and method according to the present invention may be better understood with reference to the drawings and accompanying descriptions.

Before explaining at least one embodiment of the invention in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangement of the

components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments or of being practiced or carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting.

Referring now to the drawings, Figure 1 illustrates the system according to the present invention which is referred to hereinbelow as system 10. System 10 serves for granting bonus points to a plurality of consumers. The bonus points are associated with a plurality of goods 12 (one is shown), each of goods 12 is coded by a code 14.

As used herein in the specification and in the claims section that follows the phrase "bonus points" refers to a virtual gift which is convertible upon demand to an actual benefit.

As used herein in the specification and in the claims section that follows the term "goods" includes, but is not limited to, purchasable

products or services, receipts receivable for such products or services,
etc.

System 10 according to the present invention includes a plurality

of user clients 16 (one is shown).

5 As used herein in the specification and in the claims section that follows the phrase "user client" includes, but is not limited to, personal computers (PC) having an operating system such as DOS, Windows™, OS/2™ or Linux; Macintosh™ computers; computers having JAVA™-OS
10 as the operating system; and graphical workstations such as the computers of Sun Microsystems™ and Silicon Graphics™, and other computers having some version of the UNIX operating system such as AIX™ or SOLARIS™ of Sun Microsystems™; a PalmPilot™, a PilotPC™, Nokia Communicator™ or any other handheld device; or any other known and available operating system. The term further includes mobile
15 cellular telephone devices and mobile cellular communicator devices having, in addition to telephone properties, capabilities similar to those of a personal computer (PC) or a personal digital assistant (PDA).

Hereinafter, the term "Windows™" includes but is not limited to Windows95™, Windows 3.x™ in which "x" is an integer such as "1",

Windows NT™, Windows98™, Windows CE™ and any upgraded versions of these operating systems by Microsoft Inc. (Seattle, Washington, USA).

Each of user clients 16 according to the present invention is at a
5 respective disposal of one of a plurality of consumers. Each user client
16 is operatively communicating with a code identifier 18. As further
detailed hereinunder, code identifier 18 is selected capable of identifying
code 14 of each of the plurality of goods 12. For certain embodiments
user client 16 and code identifier 18 can be integrated into a single
10 operative device.

The communication between a specific code identifier 18 and a
specific user clients 16 can be effected by any applicable communication
mode, such as cord and cordless communication modes. The cordless
communication mode selected can be, for example, infrared
15 communication, microwave communication, sound communication or
radio communication. As will be appreciated by one ordinarily skilled in
the art, each of the above communication modes is well suited for
transmission of the required data.

System 10 according to the present invention further includes at least one communication server 20 (one is shown). Server 20 is in communication with each of one of the plurality of user clients 16 upon

establishing a dial-up connection therewith. Server(s) 20 are configured
 5 so as to cumulatively grant any one consumer of the plurality of consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of a code 14 of any one of the plurality of goods 12.

As used herein in the specification and in the claims section that follows the term "consumer" includes one or more individuals having
 10 legitimate access to a specific user client 16, a specific username for communicating between any user client 16 and server(s) 20, a specific code identifier 18 having an identifier code which at different times can be connected to different user clients 16, or a specific user code communicable to server(s) 20 via user client 16. Thus, for the purpose of
 15 the present invention members of a family unit can in some applications be considered a single consumer.

According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention server(s) 20 are further configured so as to allow any one consumer to select at least one benefit from a plurality of optional benefits, each of

which is trade for a predetermined value of bonus points. The benefits can be, for example, any of the benefits offered by credit companies as a

~~trade for their bonus points, such as, but not limited to, free products or~~

services, discount products or services, aerial mileage, etc. Server 20

5 manages a saving protocol which ensures to credit any specific consumer with bonuses entitled thereto and to keep the appropriate book-keeping of earned vs. spent bonuses.

According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention

code identifier 18 is an optical scanner, whereas in this case code 14 is an

10 optical code. The optical scanner can be selected from any class of optical scanners, such as, but not limited to, laser optical scanners, LED optical scanners and CCD optical scanners. Further details relating to types of optical scanners are found in, for example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,640,002, which is incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

15 According to a preferred embodiment the optical scanner is a barcode reader, whereas the optical code is a barcode. The barcode can be, for example, a linear barcode, a circular barcode, or a two dimensional

barcode, as for example described in the home page of Intelligent

Barcode Systems, Inc./Sunmax Corp. (see,
<http://www.barcodesystems.com>).

According to another preferred embodiment of the present

invention code identifier 18 is a magnetic code reader, whereas code 14
5 is a magnetic code. According to yet another preferred embodiment of
the present invention code identifier 18 is a radiofrequency reader,
whereas code 14 is a radiofrequency code. Such readers and codes are
well known in the art and therefore require no further description herein.

10 In any case, code 14 is printed on, adhered onto and/or detachable
from goods 14 and it can be identified by identifier 18. Alternatively,
code 14 is printed on or adhered onto a code carrier which is packed with
or within goods 14.

The operation of system 10 according to a presently preferred
embodiment of the present invention is as follows.

15 A consumer purchases goods which are coded by barcodes. Each
of the goods is preferably coded by a unique barcode which entitles the
consumer to a certain value of bonus points. It should be noted that,
according to this embodiment of the present invention, even identical
products each having a unique and distinguishing barcode. At his

convenience, using a personalized (coded) barcode reader and his home PC the user (i) scans the barcodes of the purchased goods; and (ii)

~~forwards the scanned information via the Internet or electronic mail~~

(email) to a dedicated Internet site. The Internet site is simultaneously
5 and automatically forwarded with the code of the personalized barcode reader.

It will be appreciated that softwares capable of translating a barcode, or any other code, into alphanumeric characters code or a binary
code are well known in the art and are readily available from a plurality
10 of suppliers.

At this stage the following events take place.

First, each barcode is associated with a predetermined value of bonus points according to an existing lookup table.

Second, the bonus points are cumulatively added to a bonus points
15 account associated with the personalized barcode reader (i.e., with the consumer).

It will be appreciated that softwares for executing the above steps
are either readily available or are readily programmable by those of skills
in the art.

Third, the specific barcodes are either marked as used or are deleted from the lookup table, such that re-scanning a scanned barcode will not result in additional bonus points added to any account.

5 The Internet site also offers benefits, each is tradable for a known value of credit points. Thus, the user can order a benefit or benefits by trading some or all of his bonus points for the benefit or benefits of his choice.

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The Internet site preferably includes sections which are accessible by the public and serve for advertising the system, its benefits, etc., and
10 other sections which are accessible only by subscribers of the system, each of which has access to data pertaining thereto.

Hence, the present invention also provides a method for granting bonus points to a consumer. The method according to this aspect of the present invention is effected by implementing the following method
15 steps, in which, in a first step, each of a plurality of goods is associated with a unique code.

In a second step of the method, operative communication is set between a user client of the consumer and a code identifier. The code

identifier is capable of identifying the code of each of the plurality of goods.

In a third step of the method according to the present invention a

5 dial-up connection is established between the user client and at least one communication server which is configured so as to cumulatively grant the consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of any one of the plurality of goods, and is preferably also configured so as to allow the consumers to select at least one benefit from a plurality of optional benefits, each of the plurality of optional

10 benefits is trade for a predetermined value of bonus points.

In a fourth step of the method, the code identifier is used for identifying the code of at least one of a plurality of goods purchased by the consumer and the code is forwarded via the user client to the communication server.

15 Finally, the consumer is cumulatively granted a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of the at least one of the plurality of goods purchased by the consumer.

Figure 2 illustrates some preferred configurations for code identifier 18 according to the present invention, which configurations are

designed to prevent fraudulent use of system 10. Thus, code identifier 18 includes a base 24 communicating with a user client 16 and a remote

identifier 26 communicating with base 24 by, as indicated at 25, remote

communication, such as radio, infrared, sound or microwave

5 communication. The remote communication mode is designed so as to

limit the operative distance between base 24 and remote identifier 26 to a

distance characterizing home cordless telephone systems, e.g., not more

than about 50 meters. To this end, base 24 and remote identifier 26 are

equipped with compatible receivers and transmitters, so as to effect

10 remote communication as well known in the art. Base 24 preferably

communicates with a modem of user client 16. It will be appreciated that

base 24 and user client 16 may be functionally integrated into a single

operating unit. Base 24 is preferably selected bulky and heavy enough so

as to be stationary so as to limit its use to a defined location. In addition,

15 and for the same reason, base 24 is constructed so as to communicate

with user client 16 by cord 28 communication. Furthermore, base 24 is

preferably designed so as to communicate with a user client 16 only if the

user client 16 is a table top (stationary) computer. No communication is

establishable if user client 16 is a laptop or palmtop computer, so as to

further limit the use of identifier 18 to specific locations. Preferably, base 24 requires a constant voltage for operation. Most preferably the

constant voltage is about 110 Volts or about 220 Volts. In other words,

base 24 is operable when connected to a high voltage source so as to still

5 further limit the use of identifier 18 to specific locations. Base 24 or remote identifier 26 according to preferred embodiments of the present invention are designed so as to limit the communication of user client 16 when employing identifier 18 only to communication server 20.

Furthermore, communication server 20 is so designed and constructed so
10 as to communicate with a user client 16 only if user client 16 itself communicates with base 24. Furthermore, according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, base 24 is operative only if so instructed by communication server 20. Thus, obligatory relationship coexists between identifier 18 and server 20, so as to limit fraudulent use
15 of system 10. According to yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention a specific base 24 is operative only with a specific user client 16. Such specificity can be irreversibly punched into base 24 upon

installation. According to another preferred embodiment, a specific base 24 entitles a specific consumer to base related bonuses. Thus, in a way

similar to credit cards, silver, gold or platinum bases can be provided to different consumers according to the volume of their use of system 10, or

in other words, according to the volume of their consumption, which

bases entitle their owners to base related bonus. It will be appreciated

5 that defining a base 24 as silver, gold or platinum, etc., can be effected at the hardware and/or software level. If effected solely at the software level, such definition can be made automatically. In other words, upgrade or low-grade of a specific base 24 can be automatically enacted

by a dedicated software in server 20. Still preferably, remote identifier

10 26 and base 24 form an obligatory operative pair.

Remote identifier 26 is preferably a remote optical scanner. As explained hereinabove, specific scanned barcodes are either marked as used or are deleted from the lookup table, such that re-scanning a scanned barcode will not result in additional bonus points added to any

15 account. However, an alternative approach may be exercised according to which the need for unique code for each specific product is obviated.

Thus, according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention the

remote optical scanner neutralizes the code following scanning. Such neutralization can be effected by physically damaging the code in a way

which is identifiable by the scanner. Such damage can be enacted by a scraping mechanism which scrapes the code or a portion thereof or alternatively by the application of a dye onto the code, e.g., via a dye

dispenser activated upon scanning, which dye is identifiable by the scanner. In either case, a re-scan of the same code is neutralized. In the alternative, the software used in identifier 26 and/or base 24 and/or user client 16 and/or communication server 20 memorizes read codes and prevent the re utilization of pre scanned codes.

Remote identifier 26 preferably includes a mechanism for identifying a surrounding characteristic. Such a mechanism can identify, for example, lighting which is unique to shops (e.g., fluorescent lighting), sound unique to shops, or a dedicated signal deliberately produced in a shop and which is designed to render remote identifier 26 inoperative within a shop. Such a signal can be of the type employed for remote communication between base 24 and identifier 26 and which will block such communication in the shop's vicinity. The code itself or a part thereof can be an invisible code, i.e., invisible to a naked eye.

According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention the software which serve for translating a barcode, or any other code, into

alphanumeric characters code or a binary code is operable only if both base 24 and identifier 26 are operatively communicating therewith.

5 The present invention provides a bonus points system and method which enjoys the versatility and attractiveness of the credit card bonus points system, and yet is applicable to encourage consumption of goods other than credit.

10 Although the invention has been described in conjunction with specific embodiments thereof, it is evident that many alternatives, modifications and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, it is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications and variations that fall within the spirit and broad scope of the appended
15 claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for granting bonus points to a plurality of consumers, the bonus points being associated with a plurality of goods, each of said plurality of goods being coded by a code, the system comprising:

- (a) a plurality of user clients being at a respective disposal of the plurality of consumers, each of said plurality of user clients including a code identifier operatively communicating therewith, said code identifier being capable of identifying the code of each of the plurality of goods; and
- (b) at least one communication server being in communication with each of said plurality of user clients upon establishing a dial-up connection therewith, said at least one communication server being configured so as to cumulatively grant any one consumer of the plurality of consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon

identification of the code of any one of said plurality of goods.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one communication server being further configured so as to allow any one consumer of the plurality of consumers to select at least one benefit from a plurality of optional benefits, each of said plurality of optional benefits is trade for a predetermined value of bonus points.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein said code identifier is an optical scanner, whereas said code is an optical code.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein said optical scanner is a barcode reader, whereas said optical code is a barcode.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein said code identifier is a magnetic code reader, whereas said code is a magnetic code.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein said code identifier is a radiofrequency reader, whereas said code is a radiofrequency code.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein said code identifier includes a base communicating with a user client of said plurality of user clients and a remote identifier communicating with said base by remote communication.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein said base is a stationary base.

9. The system of claim 7, wherein said base communicates with said user client of said plurality of user clients by cord communication.

10. The system of claim 7, wherein said base communicates with a user client of said plurality of user clients only if said user client is a table top computer.

11. The system of claim 7, wherein said base requires a constant voltage for operation.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein said constant voltage is about 110 Volts or about 220 Volts.

13. The system of claim 7, wherein said base or said remote identifier limits communication directly or indirectly only to said communication server.

14. The system of claim 7, wherein said communication server communicates with said user client only if said user client communicates with said base.

15. The system of claim 7, wherein said base is operative only if so instructed by said communication server.

16. The system of claim 7, wherein a specific base is operative only with a specific user client.

17. The system of claim 7, wherein a specific base entitles a specific consumer to a base related bonus.

18. The system of claim 7, wherein said remote identifier is a remote optical scanner.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein said remote optical scanner neutralizes said code following scanning.

20. The system of claim 7, wherein said remote identifier and said base form an obligatory operative pair.

21. The system of claim 7, wherein said remote identifier includes a mechanism for identifying a surrounding characteristic.

22. The system of claim 1, wherein said code or a part of said code is invisible to a naked eye.

23. The system of claim 1, wherein said communication between said code identifier and one of said plurality of user clients is effected by a communication mode selected from the group consisting of cord and cordless communication modes.

24. The system of claim 7, wherein said cordless communication mode is selected from the group consisting of infrared communication, microwave communication, sound communication and radio communication.

25. The system of claim 1, wherein said code identifier operatively communicating with any one of said plurality of user clients is identifiable by a digital code.

26. A method for granting bonus points to a consumer, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) associating each of a plurality of goods with a code;
- (b) operatively communicating between a user client of the consumer and a code identifier, said code identifier being

capable of identifying the code of each of the plurality of goods;

(c) ~~establishing a dial-up connection between said user client~~

and at least one communication server being configured so as to cumulatively grant said consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of any one of said plurality of goods;

(d) using said code identifier, identifying the code of at least

one of a plurality of goods purchased by the consumer and forwarding the code via said user client to said communication server; and

(e) cumulatively granting the consumer a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of said at least one of said plurality of goods purchased by the consumer.

27. The method of claim 10, wherein said at least one

communication server being further configured so as to allow the consumers to select at least one benefit from a plurality of optional

benefits, each of said plurality of optional benefits is trade for a predetermined value of bonus points.

28. The method of claim 10, wherein said code identifier is an optical scanner, whereas said code is an optical code.

29. The method of claim 12, wherein said optical scanner is a barcode reader, whereas said optical code is a barcode.

30. The method of claim 10, wherein said code identifier is a magnetic code reader, whereas said code is a magnetic code.

31. The method of claim 10, wherein said code identifier is a radiofrequency reader, whereas said code is a radiofrequency code.

32. The method of claim 1, wherein said code identifier includes a base communicating with a user client of said plurality of user clients and a remote identifier communicating with said base by remote communication.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein said base is a stationary base.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein said base communicates with said user client of said plurality of user clients by cord communication.

35. The method of claim 32, wherein said base communicates with a user client of said plurality of user clients only if said user client is a table top computer.

36. The method of claim 32, wherein said base requires a constant voltage for operation.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein said constant voltage is about 110 Volts or about 220 Volts.

38. The method of claim 32, wherein said base or said remote identifier limits communication directly or indirectly only to said communication server.

39. The method of claim 32, wherein said communication server communicates with said user client only if said user client communicates with said base.

40. The method of claim 32, wherein said base is operative only if so instructed by said communication server.

41. The method of claim 32, wherein a specific base is operative only with a specific user client.

42. The method of claim 32, wherein a specific base entitles a specific consumer to a base related bonus.

43. The method of claim 32, wherein said remote identifier is a remote optical scanner.

44. The method of claim 42, wherein said remote optical scanner neutralizes said code following scanning.

45. The method of claim 32, wherein said remote identifier and said base form an obligatory operative pair.

46. The method of claim 32, wherein said remote identifier includes a mechanism for identifying a surrounding characteristic.

47. The method of claim 1, wherein said code or a part of said code is invisible to a naked eye.

48. The method of claim 10, wherein said communication between said code identifier and said user clients is effected by a communication mode selected from the group consisting of cord and cordless communication modes.

49. The method of claim 16, wherein said cordless communication mode is selected from the group consisting of infrared

communication, microwave communication, sound communication and radio communication.

50. The method of claim 10, wherein said code identifier operatively communicating with said user client is identifiable by a digital code.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for granting bonus points to a plurality of consumers is provided. The bonus points are associated with a plurality of goods, each of the plurality of goods being coded by a code. The system includes (a) a plurality of user clients being at a respective disposal of the plurality of consumers, each of the plurality of user clients including a code identifier operatively communicating therewith, the code identifier being capable of identifying the code of each of the plurality of goods; and (b) at least one communication server being in communication with each of the plurality of user clients upon establishing a dial-up connection therewith, the at least one communication server being configured so as to cumulatively grant any one consumer of the plurality of consumers a predetermined value of bonus points upon identification of the code of any one of the plurality of goods.

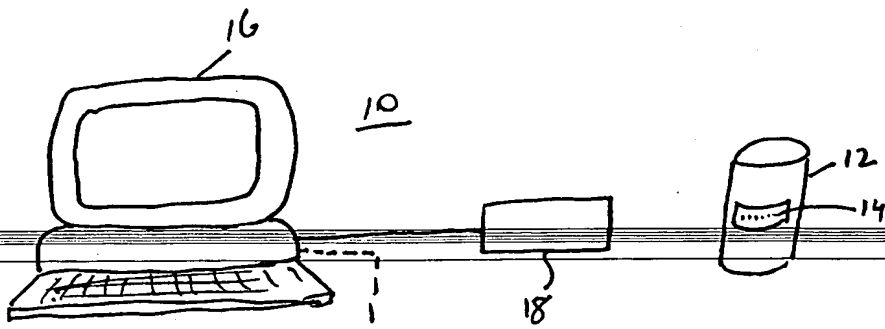


Fig. 1

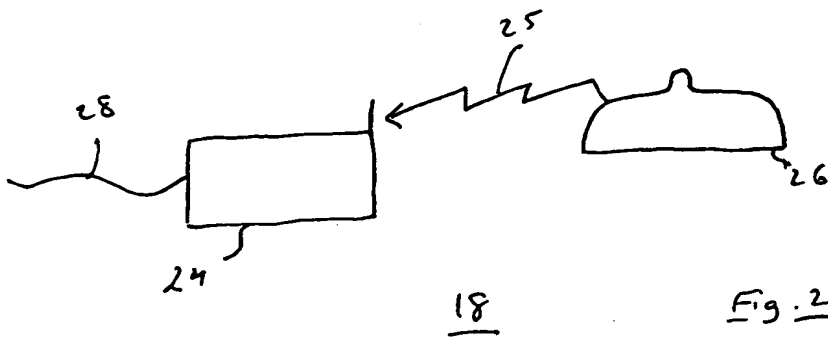
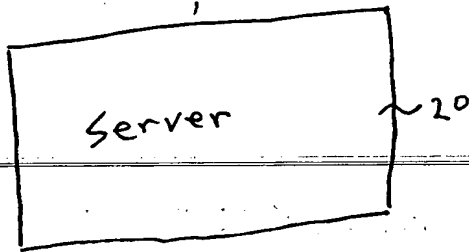


Fig. 2

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